

WASHINGTON, DC – Representative Earl Blumenauer released the following statement regarding the U.S. Department of Education waivers for the state of Oregon:

Today, the U.S. Department of Education approved Oregon's request for a waiver from certain negative penalties of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), more commonly known as the "No Child Left Behind Act." This means that Oregon will retain more control over our educational system without risk of severe punishments, such as forced school restructuring.

The flexibility waiver comes as a result of a bi-partisan effort of the Governor and other Oregon stakeholders, as well as a federal effort I supported that includes setting and implementing ambitious goals for improving educational outcomes in Oregon. This waiver will allow Oregon to pursue an approach to accountability in education that is a vast improvement over the one-size-fits-all mandates of No Child Left Behind.

No Child Left Behind has left an unfortunate legacy within our nation's school systems, forcing students, teachers and schools to over-rely on standardized test results that do not reflect the effectiveness of our efforts. We must reform this law to ensure that our children receive a well-rounded education that prepares them for the 21st century.

Working together on the state and federal level, I know we can secure continued investment in science, technology, and mathematics training, as well as a focus on other issues such as environmental education, that will provide a world class education. Through these actions, we will secure the future prosperity of Oregon. The waiver announced today is a step in the right direction.